

(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection on the City of West Branch Website at westbranchiowa.org/city-of-west-branch/mayor-city-council/meetings/. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

**West Branch, Iowa
Council Chambers**

**City Council
Regular Meeting**

**February 1, 2021
7:00 p.m.**

An Electronic Meeting (pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.8) of the City Council of the City of West Branch, Cedar County, IA was held on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Council Members, Staff and the Public presented by COVID-19.

Until further notice, all of our Council Meetings will be held electronically. Persons may still attend, observe and participate in the meeting at the Council Chambers, City Office, 110 N. Poplar St, West Branch, Iowa. Social distancing practices shall be observed for any persons attending the meeting in person at City Hall.

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call: Council members: Colton Miller, Jodee Stoolman, Jerry Sexton, Tom Dean and Nick Goodweiler were present. City Staff present: City Administrator Redmond Jones II, Deputy Clerk Leslie Brick and Finance Officer Gordon Edgar. City Staff attending via Zoom: Police Chief John Hanna, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Park & Recreation Director Melissa Russell, Library/IT Director Nick Shimmin, City Engineer Dave Schechinger and City Attorney Kevin Olson.

GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS - NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

- Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes for City Council Meeting January 19, 2021.
- Motion to Approve the Destruction of Certain Records with Shred-it Services Listed on Records Destruction Form per the Record Manual for Iowa Cities.
- Motion to Set the Public Hearing on Plans, Specifications, Form of Contract and Estimate of Cost for the I-80 Water Main Relocation project for February 16th at 7:00pm.
- Motion to Approve the Claims Report.

EXPENDITURES	2/1/2021	
ALTORFER INC	REPAIR PARTS	399.31
AMAZON	BOOKS, OFFICE & PROGRAM SUPPLI	406.87
BAKER & TAYLOR INC.	BOOKS	279.41
BIG COUNTRY SEEDS INC	ICE MELT	779.10
BOWERS CUSTOM SERVICES LLC	HAULING ROCK - CUBBY PARK	1,815.00
BROWN SUPPLY CO. INC.	SNOW PLOW CUTTING EDGES	6,297.00
CJ COOPER & ASSOCIATES	DRUG TEST	35.00
D&R PEST CONTROL	PEST CONTROL SERVICE	70.00
DEMCO	BUILDING SUPPLIES	626.64
HEIMAN FIRE EQUIPMENT	ECLIPSE CAMERA SN-DX01555	5,000.00
IOWA ONE CALL	UTILITY SERVICE LOCATION	35.10
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,562.26
LYNCH'S EXCAVATING INC	SNOW REMOVAL	1,125.00
MAINSTAY SYSTEMS, INC.	SOFTWARE LICENSES	328.00
OLSON, KEVIN D	LEGAL SERVICES- FEBRUARY, 2021	1,500.00
OVERDRIVE INC	BOOKS	718.14
PORT 'O' JONNY INC.	SERVICE CEMETERY	101.00
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES LLC	LAB ANALYSIS	913.00
QUILL CORP	CLEANING SUPPLIES	58.93
UNUM LIFE INSURANCE COMPAN	UNUM LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF	674.14
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	I-80 WIDENING COORDINATION	190.00

VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	LOT SITE PLAN REVIEW	90.50
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	KOFRON PROPERTY PUD REVIEW	724.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	319 UTILITY RELOCATION & I-80 WIDENING	1,740.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK @ BERANEK PARK	3,888.50
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	WBHS SITE PLAN REVIEW	543.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	323 I-80 WEST, WATER MAIN RELOCATION	1,754.12
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	324 WW TREATMT FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS 2021	17,490.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC.	WFPO GRANT REVIEW	362.00
VERIZON WIRELESS	VERIZON WIRELESS	420.89
WELLMARK	JANUARY INSURANCE ADJUSTMENTS	17,578.88
WEST BRANCH COMM DEVELOPMENT	DOWNTOWN \$ FOR HOT MEAL GRANT	2,000.00
WEST BRANCH FORD	VEHICLE REPAIR	346.37
TOTAL	CHECKS DATED 1-27-2021 MAILED 2/1/2021	69,852.16
PAYROLL	1/22/2021	66,673.50
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
PAID 1-27-2021		
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	VEHICLE FUEL	508.21
JAB INK GRAFIX & DESIGNS	VEHICLE REPAIR	830.00
LEE CASSABAUM	VEHICLE REPAIR	3,098.35
SHIMMIN, NICK	WINTER READING PROGRAM PRIZES	20.00
TOTAL		4,456.56
PAID PRIOR TO 1-27-2021		
BRICK, LESLIE	MILEAGE	20.33
CILEK, LOGAN	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	205.98
MERCHANT SERVICES	CREDIT CARD FEES	59.91
WAGEWORKS-HEALTH EQUITY	EMPLOYEE FLEX PLAN	869.28
BUSINESS RADIO SALES	PAGER REPAIR	235.93
HOFFMAN, MEGAN	CLEANING SERVICE	234.00
HOTSY CLEANING SYSTEMS	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES	381.00
MEDIACOM	CABLE SERVICE	41.90
PITNEY BOWES PURCHASE POWER	REPLENISH POSTAGE METER	500.00
QUAD CITY SAFETY INC	CALIBRATION GAS	715.88
US BANK CORPORATE CARD	REPAIR PARTS, SUPPLIES	352.31
WEST BRANCH FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION	EQUIPMENT REPAIR	696.71
WEST BRANCH REPAIRS	VEHICLE REPAIR	173.98
TOTAL		4,487.21
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		145,469.43
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	40,792.69	
022 CIVIC CENTER	98.88	
031 LIBRARY	8,504.69	
110 ROAD USE TAX	18,008.68	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	24,915.04	
308 PARK IMP - PEDERSEN VALLEY	960.00	
319 UTILITY RELOCATION & I-80 WIDENING	1,740.00	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK @ BERANEK PARK	3,888.50	
323 I-80 WEST, WATER MAIN RELOCATION	1,754.12	
324 WW TREATMT FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS 2021	17,490.00	
600 WATER FUND	12,943.69	
610 SEWER FUND	13,141.86	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	362.00	
950 EMPLOYEE FLEX PLAN	869.28	
GRAND TOTAL	145,469.43	

Stoolman questioned why there was a claim for snow removal from Lynch Excavating. Goodale replied that he contacted them for assistance after the New Year's Day snowstorm. Goodale said his staff was not able to get the downtown snow piles moved quickly between storms and called for their help.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller approve agenda/consent agenda. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Dean, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing: Considering the Maximum Tax Dollars from Certain Levies To Be Certified in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. Jones clarified that the current property tax levy rate of \$13.09 would not change for FY22. Jones said there was an increase in general growth from valuations from \$143,758,299 in 2020/2021 to \$150,927,653 for 2021/2022. There were no public comments. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Resolution 1975 – Approving the Maximum Tax Dollars from Certain Levies for the City’s Proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget. / Move to action.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Dean to approve Resolution 1975. AYES: Goodweiler, Dean, Miller, Sexton, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 1976 – Approving An Engineering Services Agreement Between Veenstra & Kimm, Inc. and the City of West Branch, Iowa for the 2021 Bridge Inspection and Load Rating. / Move to action.

The council discussed which bridges would be inspected (per Exhibit A of the agreement) and approved the agreement without objection.

Motion by Sexton, second by Goodweiler to approve Resolution 1976. AYES: Sexton, Goodweiler, Stoolman, Miller, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 1977 – Authorizing the Completion and Submission of a Clean Water SRF “Sponsored Project Application”, and the Related Agreement for Engineering Services. / Move to action.

Miller asked if projects such as bank stabilization or creek clean-up would be suitable projects to add under as a water quality project under the terms of the SRF Loan for the Wastewater Treatment System improvements loan. Schechinger said he would check with Impact 7G, who will be assisting Veenstra & Kimm on the application, if those activities would qualify under the program. Miller then asked Jones how the City was planning on paying for the engineer’s fee. Jones replied that he planned on using some of the park money ear marked for the Wapsi Creek widening project. Miller asked if storm water funds could be used instead and stated that all of the recent projects seemed to be trying to use the same funds. The council agreed and wanted to ensure that there would still be money left to extend the baselines at Cubby Park as planned. Jones said he would discuss further with Edgar to ensure this would not interfere with other planned projects.

Motion by Miller, second by Dean to approve Resolution 1977. AYES: Miller, Dean, Goodweiler, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion to approve Revenue Estimates to be incorporated in the City Administrator’s Recommended Budget. / Move to action.

Jones said revenue estimates would not change from FY21 and were to remain the same for FY22.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Dean, Stoolman, Dean, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the Salary Plan Intended to be incorporated into the City Administrator’s Recommended Budget. / Move to action.

Jones said the exercise used at the last Council meeting that anonymously polled the council on their preference on COLA percentages for city employees with a range of 1.38% to 2%, showed a split decision (which included the Mayor weighing in). Stoolman reminded the Mayor that his vote shouldn’t count in the matter, but Laughlin disagreed with him being able give his input on the subject. Jones said he is recommending the 2% COLA for FY22 since the last 3 years only COLA had been given to most employees and that local rate increases should be considered. Miller disagreed with Jones and said that many City employees don’t even live within the City limits and therefore are not affected by the local increases. Stoolman said her opinion was that 2% was too much since additional employee benefits were added last year (disability benefits and increased life insurance). Dean added that in his (current) job, he only received a one percent increase this year. Stoolman then said her salary is frozen and she wouldn’t be receiving an increase this year. Sexton commented that City employees don’t all do the same job, which indicates salaries

can't be similar. Different skills, different responsibilities warranted different pay and that a wage gap is probably unavoidable referring to Dean's proposed Merit Pay plan discussed at recent meetings. While the council had mixed feelings on the subject, the Mayor asked for a member to make a motion to approve the 2% COLA increase.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Goodweiler. NAYS: Dean, Stoolman. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the Non-Salary Department Expenditures (City Goals That Will Be Funded in the Proposed Budget). / Move to action.

Jones reviewed the list of Council goals set for FY22 and indicated which ones were 'funded' and which ones were not. The list included several other goals and projects set by the Council as priorities that will not require public funds, rather staff time only in completing. After further discussion the Council agreed that the alley overlay project between 4th and 5th Streets should be removed from the list of projects for FY22 and the number of votes on the subject was not truly representative of Council support.

Motion by Dean, second by Goodweiler to approve the non-salary expenditures minus the alley overlay project. AYES: Dean, Goodweiler, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the transfer from current city e-mail service to Google Workspace. / Move to action.

Shimmin explained his proposal to move the city e-mail to Google Workspace which would improve reliability, functionality, sustainability and ease of use. Shimmin added the current system has older technology which continually has issues that affect sending and receiving email. Shimmin's proposal for the move will cost the City approximately \$1080.00 per year. The Council had no objection to Shimmin's proposal.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Sexton. AYES: Goodweiler, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Jones reported that the planning & design portion of the SRF loan had been approved and the next step was to talk with the bond counsel. Jones said V&K had provided updated cost estimates for the restructure of Cedar-Johnson Road from West Main Street to Birdie Lane at \$3.2 million. Jones said now that "we have a number" we can start planning on how to fund that project. He also reported that a 28E agreement was being worked on with Johnson County on the round-about project slated to begin later this summer. Jones said Schechinger was continues to work with the Gaskill's and the creek widening project. And finally, Jones asked the Council if they wanted the City Office to reopen to the public. The Mayor and Council felt that the office should remain closed through at least February and then reassessed again in March.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

No report.

STAFF REPORTS

No reports.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Laughlin announced that Hoover's Hometown Days planning was underway which includes the fireworks display and other events scaled back. Laughlin said the planning group will meet monthly and updates will be provided as they are known.

Dean said he spoke with WBSCD Superintendent Jimmerson who advised him the school board tabled the 28E Agreement proposed by the Council that had the City paying \$150,000 of the proposed turn-lane project on West Main Street in front of the high school. Jimmerson indicated that the school board was hoping for the City to pay fifty percent of the total cost of the improvements. Dean asked the Council if they wanted to entertain further negotiations on the subject. The Council discussed the subject but felt that they had offered the best deal they could and finally decided that if the school board wanted something different, they should come to them and make a request.

Miller asked if fund balances could be made more readily available to the Council for making financial decisions on certain subjects. Edgar said he would provide that information in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the regular meeting by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Leslie Brick, Deputy City Clerk